

This City of Portsmouth Community Newsletter includes information about City-sponsored events, projects and special announcements. Visit www.cityofportsmouth.com to join the distribution list, or be removed. – *City Manager John P. Bohenko*

REVERSE 911 NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

The City is implementing a reverse 911 high-speed notification system to quickly deliver emergency information to targeted areas of Portsmouth or the entire city, and will conduct a test of the new CodeRED system next Monday (April 5). Residents whose numbers were initially loaded into the database from available information will receive a phone call alerting them the number is part of the database and would receive future calls in the event of an emergency. Police are urging those who do not receive a call, businesses, people with unlisted phone numbers, those who have changed their phone number or address within the past year, and those who use a cell phone or VoIP phone to add their information to the database by going to www.cityofportsmouth.com/police/cas.htm. Contact: 610-7411.

YARD WASTE PICKUP

Weekly curbside collection of yard waste resumes next week and residents are reminded to use paper yard waste bags or reusable plastic barrels. Yard waste is picked up by Department of Public Works crews on the same day as the trash and recycling pickup for each residence, except for weeks containing major holidays. The City offers curbside collection of yard waste from the beginning of April through the last week of November. Yard waste also may be brought to the Recycling Center behind the Department of Public Works at 680 Peverly Hill Road year-round. The Recycling Center is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. until noon. Contact: 427-1530.

CITY BUDGET HEARING

The City Council will hold a public hearing April 14 on the City Manager's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2011, which begins July 1, 2010. The hearing begins at 7 p.m. in the Portsmouth High School Auditorium and will include presentations from the Police, Fire, School and Municipal Departments. The hearing will be recorded and broadcast on local government access cable Channel 22 at noon and 6 p.m. Sunday, April 18. The budget document is scheduled to be available online at www.CityofPortsmouth.com on April 12.

RAIN BARRELS

Portsmouth water system customers can purchase 60-gallon rain barrels at a reduced price, allowing them to collect and store rainwater for such uses as irrigating lawns and gardens while saving on water bills and reducing stormwater runoff. Thanks to \$55,000 in federal stimulus funding, customers can preorder up to two of the recycled plastic barrels for just \$30 each (half the market price) online. The cost would be added to your individual water and sewer bill. The Portsmouth water system services Portsmouth, Newington, Greenland, New Castle and parts of Rye. Placing a rain barrel beneath the gutters of a home can save about 1,300 gallons of water during the summer months. To order, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/ws-barrels.htm or call 427-1530.

PARKING SESSION-TONIGHT

A public input session on whether to meter the Parrott Avenue parking lot is scheduled at 7 p.m. tonight in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers. The City Council requested that the Parking Committee evaluate metering the lot and the first step in the evaluation is taking public input. Contact: 766-1440.

BRITISH REALISM IN FILM-TONIGHT

The Library's "British Realism in Film" series opens tonight (Wednesday, March 31) at 7 p.m. with "This Sporting Life" starring Richard Harris and shown in the Library's Levenson Room. "A Taste of Honey" will be shown on April 14 and the April 28 offering is "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner," also at 7 p.m. If time permits, brief discussions will be held. Contact: 427-1540.

PARKING SPACE VENDING

Tomorrow (April 1) at 2 p.m. is the deadline to submit a minimum bid of \$5,000 for the exclusive right to vend from a parking space on State Street or one on Hanover Street between April 15 and Nov. 15. The City Council

recently amended the City's ordinance relative to motor vehicle vending from municipal parking spaces to allow vending only from spaces approved by the Parking Committee, which designated these two spaces. To learn more, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/finance/bids/46-10.pdf or call 610-7227.

GOOD FRIDAY

City Hall and the Library close at noon Friday (April 2) in observance of Good Friday. However, there will be no change to curbside collection of rubbish and recyclables, or to the public schools schedule. The Public Works Department offices will close at 11:30 a.m. The Library also will be closed Sunday (April 4) for Easter.

EASTER EGG HUNT

The City's annual Easter egg hunt for young Portsmouth children is Saturday (April 3). Preschool kids only hunt at 10:30 a.m. at Langdon Park located across from Portsmouth City Hall, followed by the K-Grade 2 crowd at 11:30 a.m. Portsmouth residents only. There will be eggs and prizes for everyone, along with other special activities and a visit from the Easter Bunny. If the hunt is canceled due to inclement weather, there is no makeup date or indoor alternative. Contact: 766-1483 or see www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-5.htm.

CDBG WEEK

The City's Community Development Department is participating in National Community Development Week next week to recognize the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which funds programs for public service agencies, housing rehabilitation, residential accessibility and non-profit accessibility, as well as various public facilities and housing redevelopment projects. Although funding is targeted toward Portsmouth residents earning low or moderate incomes, the entire city benefits from CDBG-financed projects and programs, such as the recent Atlantic Heights streetscape and park improvements. Portsmouth will receive about \$646,000 in CDBG funding in the fiscal year beginning July 1. For more info, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/community or call 610-7226.

CONCORD & PORPOISE WAY STREETScape MEETING

There will be an April 8 public information meeting regarding the Concord & Porpoise Way Streetscape Improvement Project at 7 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room A. City staff and the City-contracted engineering and design firm will present a project overview and timetable, work with residents to identify specific concerns, and answer questions. Residents also will have an opportunity to meet with the project engineer to discuss individual property owner concerns at on-site neighborhood field days on Saturday April 10 or April 17, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The project involves replacement of sewer, water and drainage infrastructure, as well as new curbing, street trees and sidewalks. Contact: 610-7226.

MORE MUSICAL CONVERSATIONS

The "Musical Conversations with Chris" series continues next Wednesday (April 7) at the Library when Portsmouth Symphony Orchestra Musical Director Christopher Hill leads a roundtable listening/discussion session on Iberia. The "Musical Conversations," which begin at 7 p.m. in the Levenson Room, are free. Participants are welcome to come develop a basic understanding of the music and the culture surrounding its composition, or share their experiences and knowledge. The session on Iberia will explore pieces by Albéniz, Bizet, Debussy, Falla, Granados, Ravel, and Turina. Contact: 427-1540.

K-9 KUDOS

Police Officer Eric Kinsman and K-9 Titan recently passed a voluntary "Good Citizen Test" by the American Kennel Association in all 10 areas. The test gauges the dog's level of training and abilities in such categories as friendliness toward strangers, politeness, behavior in a crowd, and reaction to other dogs and distractions. Portsmouth Police say passing the test is especially notable for police dogs as their training is more intense than other dogs and oriented toward law enforcement patrol functions.

FREE COMPUTER CLASSES

The Library will again be offering a full slate of free, hands-on computer classes in April, including how to use its downloadable audiobook service that now includes ebooks for the Sony Reader and the Barnes & Noble Nook. The full April class schedule is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/computerclasses.htm. Each class is a onetime workshop that can be repeated if necessary. Call 766-1720 to register.

FREE MOVIES

The Library's free spring movies series opens next Thursday, April 8, with the Academy Award-winning Disney/Pixar film "Up." The 96-minute, PG-rated animated film begins at 7 p.m. in the Library's Levenson Room. Contact: 427-1540.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Portsmouth Police are urging residents to make sure they thoroughly shred papers containing personal information or offers from credit card companies as they begin spring cleaning and preparing tax returns. To further protect yourself, make sure mail is promptly retrieved and delivery is stopped if you are going out of town. Anyone suspecting credit card fraud or identity theft should contact Portsmouth Police at 427-1500 and the Federal Trade Commission at (877) 438-4338 or make a report online at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov.

SENIOR MOMENTS THEATER

Join the members of the Senior Moments Theater Group as they "make fun WITH being old" at a free performance Saturday, April 10, at 2 p.m. at the Library's Levenson Room. The troupe, sponsored by the Seacoast Repertory Theatre in Portsmouth, has given over 175 educational and fun performances in New Hampshire, Southern Maine and Northern Massachusetts. Contact the Library: 427-1540.

EMILY DICKINSON ON TOUR

Emily Dickinson is coming to the Library on Sunday, April 11, as part of a National Poetry Month tour. Meet the reclusive "Belle of Amherst" and hear about her life and writing when Emily Dickinson, as portrayed by living history presenter Debra Conner, visits Portsmouth and three other communities in a tour funded in part by a NH Humanities Council grant. The program begins in the Levenson Room at 2 p.m. Contact: 427-1540.

NYC TRIP

Registration opens in less than two weeks for the May 15 spring trip to New York City sponsored by the Recreation Department. You can sign up beginning at 1 p.m. Monday, April 12, at the Connie Bean Center. The cost is \$55 and includes round-trip coach bus service. For more info, see www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-3.htm or call 766-1483.

NEW LINCOLN AVE. AREA WORK MEETING

The City has scheduled an April 13 public input session to discuss the newest phase of the Lincoln Avenue area sewer separation project to upgrade water, sewer and drain lines. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room B about the "Contract 3A Sewer Separation Project," which will include Lincoln Avenue (from Middle Street to Richards Avenue), Miller Avenue, Broad Street (from Lincoln Avenue to South Street), Spring Street and Bersum Lane. Work is expected to begin in July. Project updates will be posted at www.CityofPortsmouth.com once work begins. Contact: 766-1413.

"MUSIC FROM THE TRADITIONS"

The Library's "Music from the Traditions" series resumes Thursday, April 15, with a performance by the award-winning Reggae band Jah Spirit, which has seven albums to its credit. The 90-minute show, which begins at 7 p.m. in the Levenson Room, will lift your spirits and leave you singing, maybe even dancing, on Tax Day. On Sunday, April 18, at 2 p.m., "Two Old Friends" Mac McHale and Emery Hutchins return to the Library. With banjo, guitar, mandolin, concertina, bodran, octave mandolin and heart-warming vocal harmonies, Two Old Friends tell a story in music of how immigrants came to this country from Ireland, Scotland and Great Britain. Contact: 427-1540.

TAX EXEMPTIONS DEADLINE

Don't miss the April 15 deadline to apply for elderly and disabled exemptions for the December 2010 tax bill. The annual income and asset limits for both the elderly and disabled exemptions is \$33,182 for single taxpayers and \$40,933 for married couples. Total assets for both exemptions have increased to \$110,611, whether single or married. For an application, contact the Assessor's Office at 610-7214 or 610-7249, or download the form from www.cityofportsmouth.com/assessors/index.htm.

PEIRCE ISLAND CLEANUP

The Peirce Island Committee, in association with the Dog Owners Group of the Seacoast (D.O.G.S.) and Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation, is inviting the public to help with a cleanup effort at Peirce Island on Saturday, April 17, beginning at 9 a.m. Bags will be provided for trash and recyclables. See the "Fundraisers" section below for the Peirce Island Enhancement Project's April 6 fundraiser to purchase new park benches. Contact: boudreaux.lyx@gmail.com or 617-0958.

SAGAMORE CREEK WALK

The Third Annual Walk on the Sagamore Creek land (off Jones Avenue) will be Saturday, April 17. Meet at 2 p.m. at the gate on Jones Avenue. The walk will be led by longtime Portsmouth residents Dick and John Adams. Accompanying them will be local naturalists Davis Finch and Don Green, who will interpret the wildlife along the trails and show points of special interest, including the vernal pools. There is no rain date. Contact: Sarah Hamill at 373-8288.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION TIME

Kindergarten and new student registration for the next school year will be held over the next two weeks, beginning tomorrow (April 1) at Dondero Elementary, followed by New Franklin Elementary next Thursday (April 8), and Little Harbour Elementary (436-1708) on April 14. Make an appointment at the school your child will be attending and find out which paperwork should be completed prior to registration. Forms can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/school. Kindergarten students must be 5 years old by September 30 and reside in Portsmouth.

SWIMMING LESSONS

Registration has begun for the second set of spring swimming lessons beginning the week of April 20 at the Indoor Pool. Register there during normal pool hours. More swimming lessons info can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/adultswimclasses.pdf. There will be a lifeguard training class from May 11-23 and info will be available tomorrow (April 1) at the Indoor Pool. Information on the swim lessons planned this summer at Peirce Island Pool can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-11.htm. Contact: 427-1545.

MORE REC NEWS

The Recreation Department's Spring/Summer brochure is now available at all Rec Department facilities and online at www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs.htm. Any girl in grades 3-5 interested in playing in a youth field hockey program this spring should call Shannon Fernald at 969-6637. The program runs on Wednesdays after school for seven weeks. Registration for the spring baseball instructional league for ages 8-12 (as of July 31, 2010) continues through Friday (April 2) from 1 p.m.-7:30 p.m. at the Spinnaker Point Adult Recreation Center. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-3.htm for details or contact 766-1483. Spinnaker Point continues to offer a number of adult classes. Call 766-1483 for a complete listing or see www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/programs-8.htm.

WINDSTORM DAMAGE REPORTS

In order to determine if Portsmouth meets the federal disaster guidelines that would trigger federal assistance for repairs and economic losses not covered by insurance, Portsmouth Emergency Management is still seeking information about privately owned primary residences and any businesses damaged as a result of the February windstorm. See www.cityofportsmouth.com/stormfeb2010.htm for more info, including how to submit a storm damage report.

ROADWORK

The Peirce Island Bridge replacement project is continuing with workers doing repairs and drilling holes for the new bridge rail. Two-way traffic will remain in effect unless equipment in the road necessitates police officers to direct traffic. The work is expected to be completed by the end of May. Anyone with questions can call Tom Richter at 766-1412. Meanwhile, the Ceres Street project also is continuing. Contact: 766-1411.

Mark your calendar...

- Free income tax preparation is available every Tuesday from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and on Sundays from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., through April 13 at the Library's Hilton Garden Room.
- Portsmouth Public Schools will have their spring break the week of April 26.
- There will be an April 28 meeting to update the public on the progress of the Middle School project from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Little Theater at Portsmouth High School.
- The School Department has announced the following graduation dates: June 4, Robert J. Lister Academy; June 10, Portsmouth Middle School and June 11, Portsmouth High School.
- The Second Annual Portsmouth Sustainability Fair is Saturday, May 8.
- The City's annual Spring Household Hazardous Waste Day will be Saturday, May 22, from 8 a.m. to noon, at the Department of Public Works on Peverly Hill Road.

Fundraisers....

PEIRCE ISLAND & PIZZA

Order a large pizza at Flatbread next Tuesday, April 6, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m., and you can help raise money for park benches on Peirce Island to be purchased through the Peirce Island Enhancement Project. Flatbread, which is located at 138 Congress Street, will donate \$3.50 for every large pizza ordered. Prizes also will be raffled off to benefit the Project. Contact: boudreaux.lyx@gmail.com or 617-0958.

DONDERO IDOL

If you enjoy singing, dancing and watching friends, neighbors, teachers (and even a principal) belt it out onstage, don't miss Dondero Idol II next Thursday, April 8, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the High School auditorium. The show begins at 6 p.m. and includes a raffle with 35 items, as well as pizza and snacks for sale before the show and during intermission. Doors open at 5 p.m. for dinner. Tickets are \$6 at the door, \$5 in advance at Dondero Elementary or email edwardslin@aol.com. All proceeds benefit the 5th-graders' expedition to Environmental School.

CINDERELLA'S CLOSET

Drop off clean, gently used prom and cocktail dresses appropriate for the Junior Prom, Senior Prom and Senior Banquet at Portsmouth High School main office through next Friday, April 9. The PHS Friends of Rachel group also will accept shoes, costume jewelry, gloves and any other suitable accessories for these events. The school's Guidance Department will make referrals for girls to "shop" on April 10. Unused items will be donated to the Cinderella Project of NH. Contact dbarlow@portsmouth.k12.nh.us or call 436-7100, extension 2145.

MEETINGS: To see a list of upcoming City-related meetings, agendas for future meetings and minutes of past meetings, always check the City's Web site, www.CityofPortsmouth.com, or the Meetings Calendar at www.cityofportsmouth.com/calendar/2010/index.htm.

SCHOOL CALENDARS: The School Department's Activities Calendar for all schools is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/allschoolactivitiescalendar.htm. A link to the Portsmouth High sports schedule is at www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/phs/athlsch.htm.

HOURS: Portsmouth City Hall (431-2000) is open from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The School Department Central Office (431-5080) is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Library hours are: 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

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